and wherein said ionizable gas within said evacuated volume is at a first pressure and said ionizable gas within said ion source is at a second pressure, and wherein said first pressure is substantially less than said second pressure.

Remarks

Reconsideration is requested.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ceasar et al. in view of Fu et al., King and Pinarbasi.

Applicants propose to amend claim 1 as shown above to include the feature that the curved target surface has a smooth continuous curvature in one direction. This feature is clearly shown in applicants' drawings (see Figs. 3 and 3A).

The Fu et al. patent was cited by the examiner to show that a curved target surface was known or would have been obvious to use in the present invention. However, Fu et al. shows complicated curvatures that would be ineffective in directing secondary electrons. Further, Fu et al. have no discussion of secondary electrons and are not concerned with them. As for the central target region 106 of Fu et al. that is contoured: (1) there is no discussion of the function of the contour shown; (2) those skilled in the art recognize that the process of physical vapor deposition described by Fu et al. includes magnetrons and that the contour shown is a typical wear pattern of a magnetron target. Thus, the contour of central target region 106 appears

to be a result of normal operation, rather than a proposed contour to achieve a desired result.

With the proposed amendment to claim 1, it is believed that all objections to claims 1-4 would be overcome.

If there should be any further issues remaining, please contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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